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A Weekend in Port Jervis

📅 October 17, 2019 👤 Andrew Frey (<https://www.newyorkbyrail.com/author/andrew/>)



A mother and daughter overlook the city of Port Jervis at Elks-Brox Memorial Park. | Photo Courtesy of Andrew Frey

Kneeling down to tighten the laces of my boots, I breathe in the crisp autumn air. It's a brisk day in Orange County, but the perfect day for a hike. I study a large trail map on a kiosk in the parking lot. Several others do the same, including a couple on mountain bikes accompanied by their small dog. Checking one last time that I have everything I'll need for today's adventure. I pick up my gear and hit the trails of the Port Jervis Watershed Park and Recreation Area.

PORT JERVIS WATERSHED PARK AND RECREATION AREA

Maintained by the Outdoor Club of Port Jervis, the 307-acre Port Jervis Watershed Park and Recreation Area (<https://www.newyorkbyrail.com/local-guide/port-jervis-watershed-park-recreation-area/>) provides drinking water for the city of Port Jervis, but it also has an extensive trail system neighboring the 186-acre

Elks-Brox Memorial Park, with its picnic areas and additional trails, including to the top of Point Peter.

Led by Mike Ward, President of the Port Jervis Outdoor Club, I trek the Turntable Trail, named after the historic Erie Railroad Roundhouse Turntable of Port Jervis, the largest, longest operating turntable in the eastern U.S. and still fully operational! A trail recommended for “advanced” hikers, the mile-long path summits at the Point Peter flag, the conclusion of our expedition. Along the way, Ward chronicles the development of the Port Jervis Watershed Park and Recreation Area and the historic river city more than 820 feet below us. I learn of ProAm fat tire and mountain biking competitions throughout the year, regular guided hikes with Outdoor Club volunteers, guided full-moon hikes, and special events like the Halloween-themed *Monsters on the Mountain* lantern hike. I also hear of occasional encounters with black bears and timber rattlesnakes, but Ward assures me these encounters are *very* rare.



Outdoor Club of Port Jervis President, Mike Ward at Elks-Brox Memorial Park in Port Jervis, NY. | Photo Courtesy of Andrew Frey

Nearing the top of the trail, glimpses of the city begin to appear through the thinning trees. Atop Point Peter, panoramic views of the Shawangunk and Kittatinny mountains and the Delaware and Neversink river valleys seem endless. For miles, shades of orange, red, yellow, and green color the surrounding highlands, farmland, forests, rolling hills and lush valleys. At their base, the Neversink and Delaware rivers ramble through the sleepy city of Port Jervis to their confluence, which sits at the tri-state junction of New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania.



Hiking the Turntable Trail at the Watershed Park and Recreation Area. | Photo Courtesy of Andrew Frey

A view of Port Jervis from Turntable Trail in the Watershed Park and Recreation Area. | Photo Courtesy of Andrew Frey

Families picnic at the scenic overlook. The mountain bikers and pup I saw earlier today rest and adjust their gear. As Ward and I take in the view, he points out the sights, including Riverside Park, the Port Jervis Pump Track, the Erie Railroad Roundhouse Turntable and Veteran's Park. We can even see High Point State Park, the highest point in New Jersey.

Before we begin our descent toward the parking lot, several cars pull up at the lookout via Skyline Drive, which begins at East Main Street in downtown Port Jervis and allows an easier route to the beautiful views.



A view of Front St. in Downtown Port Jervis. | Photo Courtesy of Andrew Frey

DOWNTOWN PORT JERVIS

Following my morning trek, I head to Front Street to spend an afternoon exploring the city of Port Jervis.

The southern end of the Upper Delaware Scenic Byway, Port Jervis serves as the gateway to the Upper Delaware River. The city has been a transportation center for hundreds of years, first as a stop on the Old Mine Road, the first 100-mile road in America, then as a port on the Delaware and Hudson Canal, supplying coal to New York and Philadelphia, and finally as a division center for the New York and Lake Erie Railroad.

Today, the town is going through a renaissance with new eclectic boutiques, restaurants, a brewery, and now Foundry42 (<https://www.newyorkbyrail.com/local-guide/foundry-42/>), a retail space that offers a cafe setting and interesting articles for sale. I stop in for a cup of coffee and peruse their selection of eclectic home furnishing and handcrafted products, before taking home a large shopping bag of locally-sourced goods like maple and fig jam from Finding Home Farms, cocoa coffee chipotle peanuts from Forkin' Good Nuts, and fresh ground coffee.

Established in 2016 by Cooper Boone, Foundry42 is a representation of the owner's mind map; a creative workshop, food, gathering, entertainment and education. Explore the Loft at Foundry42 and discover countless programs and events for kids and adults throughout the year. The exhibition space houses

entertainment, specialty events like Psychic Sundays and weekly Storytime, classes like Kids in the Kitchen with Cooper, and private rentals!

Foundry42 is also home to the Foundry Theatre Company! Taught by former Broadway and television actors, Foundry's theatre arts training courses offer professional, educational experiences to build curious, creative, and confident young artists and people.

Experience the workshop and home furnishings retail space with many items being produced by the Foundry42 team, and take home some feel-good baked goodies!



Fox N Hare Brewing Co.'s "Hop Head" decorates the wall above cozy corner. | Photo Courtesy of Orange County Government



Sampling a flight of the extensive list of brews on tap at Fox N Hare Brewing Co. | Photo Courtesy of Orange County Government

Two storefronts away is Fox N Hare Brewing Co. (<https://www.newyorkbyrail.com/local-guide/fox-n-hare-brewing-co/>), a taproom and restaurant serving a variety of delicious brews with a high-energy, bohemian vibe. After sampling a flight of the extensive list of brews on tap, I end my visit with a delicious Erie Canal burger for dinner at the nearby, historic Erie Hotel and Restaurant (<https://www.newyorkbyrail.com/local-guide/the-erie-hotel-and-restaurant/>).

STAY AT CEDAR LAKES ESTATE

A true hidden gem of the Hudson Valley, Cedar Lakes Estate (<https://www.newyorkbyrail.com/local-guide/cedar-lakes-estate/>) is a timeless, private estate that hosts modern events and retreats. Following a long day of hiking and downtown fun, I check-in to the poolside Cabana. The cabin-like accommodation offers luxury amenities like an espresso machine, fireplace, and washer and dryer, not to mention a breathtaking view of a moonlit lake and surrounding mountains from its doorway. Across from the pool are picnic tables and hammocks, illuminated by a string of lights. I lounge in a hammock and sway beneath the stars.

Guests can also "Glamp" in camp-style houses! Enjoy traditional bunk beds, but not so traditional plush mattresses and modern decor. Comforts include simple bathrooms located inside of each camp-style house, as well as Casper mattresses, fresh towels, linens, and toiletries.

Across the vast, 500-acre property, Cedar Lakes Estate also hosts unforgettable weddings, events (<https://www.cedarlakesestate.com/special-events/>), and retreats throughout the year. Ceremonies, receptions, and events take place on The Mountain Top with a view of the Shawangunk Mountains, the

Pavillion, The Barn, a modern 5,400-square-foot barn with floor-to-ceiling glass windows, The Treehouse, and more.



Inside the cozy Cabana at Cedar Lakes Estate. | Photo Courtesy of Andrew Frey



A scenic view of the foliage at Cedar Lakes Estate. | Photo Courtesy of Trevanna

TAKE THE TRAIN TO PORT JERVIS IN ORANGE COUNTY

Ride Metro-North/NJ Transit to Port Jervis Station in the Hudson River Valley (<https://www.newyorkbyrail.com/hudson-valley/>). Metro North/NJ Transit service to Port Jervis is accessible at New York Penn Station (<https://www.newyorkbyrail.com/amtrak-stations/penn-station/>) where connections are also available from Long Island Railroad and out of state Amtrak trains.

From Port Jervis Station, Front Street and downtown Port Jervis are a 5-minute walk.

Uber and Lyft are also available to and from the Port Jervis Watershed Park and Recreation Area, historic sites and other points of interest.

WHAT TO DO IN PORT JERVIS

Port Jervis Watershed Park and Recreation Area

An extensive trail system throughout the Port Jervis Watershed (<https://www.newyorkbyrail.com/local-guide/port-jervis-watershed-park-recreation-area/>) and Elks-Brox Memorial Park, offering natural trails and dramatic vistas of the Shawangunk and Kittatinny mountains, and the Delaware and Neversink River Valleys.

*Distance from Port Jervis Station: 1.4 Miles
Skyline Dr., Port Jervis, NY 12771*

Foundry 42

A stylish home furnishings retailer, Foundry 42 (<https://www.newyorkbyrail.com/local-guide/foundry-42/>) expands beyond their handcrafted merchandise with a coffee bar, baked goods, theater and workshops.

Distance from Port Jervis Station: 0.3 Miles
42 Front St., Port Jervis, NY 12771

Port Jervis Pump Track

A continuous loop of asphalt, mounds and curves allowing for endless riding. Rent a bike from the nearby Action Bikes and Outdoors, or bring your own gear, and hone your skills before hitting the trails. For all ages. Free!

Distance from Port Jervis Station: 0.6 Miles
81 King St., Port Jervis, NY 12771

Erie Railroad Roundhouse Turntable

The longest operating turntable in the eastern U.S. The fully operational turntable is close to the Port Jervis Metro-North station.

Distance from Port Jervis Station: 0.1 Miles
78 Pike St, Port Jervis, NY 12771

WHERE TO EAT IN PORT JERVIS

The Erie Hotel & Restaurant

An historic hotel, restaurant and bar located in the heart of downtown Port Jervis, The Erie Hotel & Restaurant (<https://www.newyorkbyrail.com/local-guide/the-erie-hotel-and-restaurant/>) has been a beloved staple in the community for over 100 years.

Distance from Port Jervis Station: 0.3 Miles
9 Jervis Ave., Port Jervis, NY 12771

Fox N Hare Brewing Co.

A microbrewery and restaurant with handcrafted beers, delicious eats and a welcoming atmosphere. Fox N Hare Brewing Co. (<https://www.newyorkbyrail.com/local-guide/fox-n-hare-brewing-co/>) is the perfect place to enjoy tasty meals made with locally grown food, and to enjoy beers with friends.

Distance from Port Jervis Station: 0.3 Miles
46 Front St., Port Jervis, NY 12771

Fogwood + Fig

A café serving vegan, house-crafted and seasonal comfort food including creative sandwiches, burgers and whole meal bowls, in a rustic, cozy setting.

Distance from Port Jervis Station: 0.3 Miles
9 Jervis Ave., Port Jervis, NY 12771

WHERE TO STAY IN PORT JERVIS

Cedar Lakes Estate

Cedar Lakes Estate (<https://www.newyorkbyrail.com/local-guide/cedar-lakes-estate/>) is a timeless, private estate that hosts modern events and retreats. Enjoy luxury overnight accommodations, outdoor activities and breathtaking views of tree-lined lakes, rolling green hills and stunning mountains in the heart of the Hudson Valley.

Distance from Port Jervis Station: 6.8 Miles
1 Team USA Way, Port Jervis, NY 12771

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